

REMARKS

Claims 2-12, 15 and 16 are now currently pending in the present application. Claims 1, 13 and 14 have been cancelled in the present response. Claims 2-12 have been amended herein. New claims 15 and 16 have been added. Support for the present claim amendments may be found in the present specification, at least, at page 8, lines 19-25 and page 18, lines 1-4. No new matter has been added by way of the present claim amendments.

Applicants respectfully submit that no new issues are raised that would present the Examiner with the burden of additional search and/or consideration. For instance, Applicants are simply clarifying arguments already of record. In the event that the present submission does not place the application into condition for allowance, entry thereof is respectfully requested as placing the application into better form for appeal.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 – Anticipation

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by USP 5,116,868 to Chen et al. (hereinafter “Chen”).

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by USP 6,495,598 to Yoneda et al. (hereinafter “Yoneda”).

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2003-313123 to Tomoko et al. (hereinafter “Tomoko”).

In response to the outstanding rejections, Applicants have amended the present claims to clarify the method of claim 12. That is, claim 12 has been amended to expressly recite the conditions contemplated by “tear abnormality”. Further, Applicants have amended claims 2-11 and added new claims 15 and 16 to depend on claim 12. Thus, each of the pending claims is now directed to the previously-claimed method for treating tear abnormality.

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited prior art references teach or suggest the presently claimed invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Monique T. Cole, Reg. No. 60,154 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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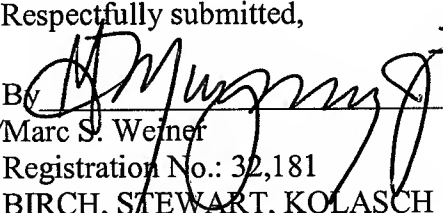
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